



# Australian Bureau of Statistics

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## Summary

### Newsletter

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### **ABS OUTPOSTING- DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

A Tasmanian ABS officer recently completed a 10 week outposting at the Department of Education, providing advice on school communities data. A need had been identified for 'Cluster Environmental Scans' - collections of social and economic data which could illuminate community issues and opportunities at the school 'cluster' geographic level. The outposted officer identified a range of data sources, requested access to these data, and outlined issues and methods associated with deriving cluster level tables from them.

As well as working on the Cluster Environmental Scans, the outposted officer reviewed another statistical profile that had been prepared by the department, and shared information with the Department's staff about accessing ABS data, its availability, data needs, and statistical issues and opportunities for the future.

For further information on the Department of Education outposting please contact Lisa Farrell on 6222 5853 or email [lisa.farrell@abs.gov.au](mailto:lisa.farrell@abs.gov.au). For general information about the outposted officer service please contact David O'Brien on 6222 5783 or email [dj.obrien@abs.gov.au](mailto:dj.obrien@abs.gov.au).

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### **2006 CENSUS OF POPULATION AND HOUSING**

#### **Mesh Blocks - Your comments welcome**

The ABS has developed the Mesh Block, a new geographical unit that will change the way statistics are used in Australia. Mesh Blocks are a new micro level of statistical geography and contain between 30 and 60 households, or about one fifth the size of the smallest geographic unit currently in use, the Census Collection District (CCD). The ABS has recently released draft Mesh Block boundaries in CD Rom format with an associated

information paper. Responses to the draft boundaries should reach the ABS prior to 31 December 2005. For further information contact Michael Toole on (02) 6252 7759 or email [m.toole@abs.gov.au](mailto:m.toole@abs.gov.au).

## **Field recruitment**

Field recruitment has commenced for the 2006 Census, with an advertisement for District Managers appearing in the 3 local Tasmanian dailies on 29 October. A nationwide advertising campaign for Area Supervisor positions will commence on 11 February, 2006 and for Collector positions on 8 April, 2006. Contact details for Area Supervisor and Collector applications will be advertised closer to the dates.

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## **NEW RELEASE OF STATE ACCOUNTS**

Australian National Accounts: State Accounts (cat.no. 5220.0) was released on 9 November, 2005. This publication includes dissections for the last 9 years of various national accounting aggregates by state and territory including household income, household final consumption expenditure, government final consumption expenditure, private gross fixed capital formation, public gross fixed capital formation, international trade in exports and imports of goods and services, State Final Demand, agricultural income, Gross State Product at market prices, total factor income by industry, compensation of employees, gross operating surplus and gross mixed income by industry. It also includes estimates of Gross State Product and State Final Demand and its major components in chain volume terms.

For information contact Kieran O'Brien on 6222 5847 or email [kieran.obrien@abs.gov.au](mailto:kieran.obrien@abs.gov.au).

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## **2005-06 AGRICULTURAL CENSUS**

In 2006, the ABS will be conducting the Agricultural Census. The Census is expected to be despatched in June 2006, with preliminary estimates released late 2006 or early 2007. The 2005-06 Agricultural Census is expected to be sent to approximately 190,000 agricultural establishments around Australia that meet the ABS's scoping criteria.

Several rounds of question and form testing have been conducted for the Agricultural Census, with the latest being a pilot version of the census form. The pilot version of the census form was despatched to 1,100 agricultural establishments, with analysis of the returned forms now underway.

The main change for the 2005-06 Agricultural Census will be the move to the Australian Business Register (ABR), which will become the main frame for the Agricultural Census and subsequent Surveys. This will allow the ABS to approach all businesses that have indicated some form of agricultural activity when registering an Australian Business Number (ABN). The new frame will replace the original ABS land-based list frame, which had become difficult to maintain. The new ABR-based frame will allow for greater coverage of agricultural businesses for ABS statistical collections, resulting in more accurate estimates.

For further information please contact Cherie Poulton on (03) 6222 5955 or email [c.poulton@abs.gov.au](mailto:c.poulton@abs.gov.au).

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## **NEW AUSTRALIA-WIDE SURVEY: NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

In November 2005, the ABS will conduct a Natural Resource Management (NRM) Survey. This new survey is designed to collect information relating to the management of natural

resources on Australian farms. The survey will be conducted by mail from approximately 20,000 farms.

Information will be collected on a range of natural resource management topics including soil and land management, water use and management, vegetation, weeds and pests, and other general farm management issues. Within each topic, questions will include: the extent and type of natural resource problems, activities undertaken to manage the identified problems, and the associated costs (in terms of labour and financial resources).

Recent user consultation established a high demand for regular and comprehensive statistics on natural resource management, particularly in relation to the Agricultural sector. It is proposed that this survey will be repeated on a biennial basis.

The NRM data will be used to support planning, policy development and decision-making. The data will be of particular interest to primary producers and agricultural industry organisations, and Commonwealth and state government agencies responsible for primary industry, resources and the environment. NRM data complements current agricultural statistical collections.

The results of this initial survey will be available in November 2006.

For further information please contact Erica McCoull on (03) 6222 5977 or email [erica.mccoull@abs.gov.au](mailto:erica.mccoull@abs.gov.au).

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## **100 YEARS OF ABS ON 8 DECEMBER**

The ABS will celebrate its 100th birthday on 8 December 2005.

Australian Statistician Dennis Trewin said it was an opportunity to acknowledge the importance of quality statistics and the impact they had made in the development of modern Australia.

"Quality statistics are one of the most important elements of an effective democracy and the foundations for sensible and informed decisions," he said.

"The ABS strives to meet this important responsibility — keeping the nation informed and helping it understand itself.

"The hard work and commitment by generations of ABS staff over the last century has made the ABS a trusted national institution and one of the world's most respected statistical agencies.

"The celebration also gives us an opportunity to thank the individuals and businesses who have provided data through our surveys. We are grateful for their contribution, and dependent on their continuing support to produce relevant and useful information."

On 8 December there will be national and local events and activities across Australia involving past and current staff. It will be the culmination of a suite of ABS Centenary events held throughout 2005.

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## **ABS SERVICES AVAILABLE AT THE HOBART OFFICE**

### **Client Services**

When you need to engage professional, timely and objective information or statistical

consultancy services, first consider the range of services available from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The ABS Hobart Office has a team of consultants available to answer all your information and statistical enquiries on a fee for service basis. Our consultants can assist you with the provision of data for the most recent period available or on a time series basis. They can provide tailored reports containing tables, commentary and maps which highlight the characteristics of a target market. To discuss your information needs contact the ABS Client Services or email [mary.eagle@abs.gov.au](mailto:mary.eagle@abs.gov.au).

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## SELECTED RECENT RELEASES

1382.0 Informing a Nation: the Evolution of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (released 31/10/2005)

A history of the Australian Bureau of Statistics and its predecessor the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics. It covers the period from 1905 to the present day. The publication is organised thematically and includes chapters on subject areas such as economic statistics, the census, social statistics, prices statistics, methodology and technology in the Bureau, international relations, the Bureau's clients and dissemination, and the culture of the Bureau. As well as the written history, the publication presents a pictorial history of the work of the Bureau and its staff over the last century.

4618.0 Water Use on Australian Farms, 2003-04 (released 27/10/2005)

Information on irrigation practices on Australian farms was collected in the Water Survey Agriculture 2002-03 and the Agricultural Survey 2003-04. This included data on the type and area of crops irrigated, volume of water applied, sources of irrigation water and irrigation methods. Data is available for each state.

6202.0 Labour Force, Australia, Oct 2005 (released 10/11/2005)

Summary results of the monthly Labour Force Survey containing estimates of employed and unemployed persons classified by sex, full-time/part-time status, states and territories and some age groups; and persons not in the labour force.

## FUTURE RELEASES

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## About this release

Statistical News Tasmania is a quarterly electronic newsletter providing information about new developments including projects, surveys, outposted ABS officers, recent statistical releases, seminars, training and reviews.